

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for enhancing streaming operation in a distributed communication system providing communication links between a plurality of stream servers, a client machine requesting a particular media file, and a stream server selection unit, comprising the steps of:

retrieving a list of stream servers from an Universal Description, Discovery, and Integration (UDDI) directory service,

evaluating the list of stream servers by retrieving and considering the stream server's operating parameters, retrieving and considering the format(s) in which the media file is presented, retrieving and considering preferences from the client, retrieving and considering the connectivity properties of the client, wherein retrieving and considering the stream server's operating parameters further comprises the step of determining operating parameters of each stream server on the list of stream servers, wherein the operating parameters are formed by information about the supported media formats of the stream servers, and wherein the step of retrieving and considering preferences from the client further comprises the steps of retrieving and considering a list of all available media players at the client, and retrieving and considering a preferred media player,

selecting one of the stream servers on the list,

determining if the selected stream server can handle the media format of a first media file, if the selected stream server can not handle the first media format, converting the first media file to a second media file having a second media format,

determining if the selected stream server can handle the second media format, if the selected stream server can handle the second media format selecting the second media file, if the selected stream server can not handle the second media format then selecting a third media file having a third media format,

determining if the quality of the selected media file is too high for the connectivity properties of the client, if the quality of the selected media file is too high transcoding the selected media file,

generating a meta file for the selected stream server, and

initiating streaming from the selected stream server.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further includes the step of retrieving and considering the player availability.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of evaluating the list of stream servers further includes the step of weighting one or more of the considered parameters.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether or not the format of the media has changed.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

14. (Original) A device for enhancing streaming operation in a distributed communication system providing communication links between a plurality of stream servers, a client machine requesting a particular media file, and a stream server selection unit, the device being configured to perform a method according to claim 1.

15. (Original) A computer program product stored on a computer usable medium, comprising computer readable program means for causing a computer to perform a method according to claim 1.